

by Sandy Mackay

Dear Eric,

You are an actor, maybe you can tell me, what makes a film Canadian? I ask because I went to see a screening of *The Outside Chance of Maximilien Glick*. It is nominated for a Genie Award.

This film is about Max, a twelve-year-old Jewish kid, getting ready for his Bar Mitzvah. But the rabbi dies, so Max's grandfather hires a new rabbi, sight-unseen, to speed poor little Max through the process. Of course, the new rabbi is an orthodox Jew, a Hasidic with the fore-locks and the hat. He stands out a bit in beautiful Beausejour Manitoba. The real crux of the show is that Max doesn't really like being Jewish, because of prejudices from both sides of the fence. This movie is really about racism in a multicultural society.

It is a notably Canadian movie because everyone is after advice of sorts and everyone gets the best advice from someone outside her or his own culture.

While having tea with a Japanese woman and a Brit piano teacher, Max hears the zen-like "never let other people's limitations become yours." The Hasidic Rabbi Tirielman gets this one from a dour scottish granny, "fresh air into musty corners" (she was talking spring cleaning, he was thinking old dreams and stagnant traditions). Only in Canada eh?

MAX GLICK



The good camera effects are worth mentioning as well. The actors acknowledge the camera every so often, and I like that; it shifts the pace of the movie a little. When Max is stressed out, they shoot his point-of-view through a fish-eye lens, creating a kind of horrific vision. Max stands ready to put a christmas angel on the top of a tree while his ancestors howl sacrilege and guilt

in his ears. The Ukranian family stares down at him, waiting.

There are some excellent big prairie sky shots, sheets of music against that wide empty space, not contrived scenery footage. And editing mistakes! I like these especially: they remind the viewer of the techi who has been holding that boom mike for god knows how long, and movies just aren't made without those people.

What else did I like about this movie? The Music! Great clanging noisy Klezmer stuff, the traditional Jewish Hora-dancing music! Fiddles and accordians and clarinets all wailing away in minor keys. I love it!

So why is this a great movie? It is another Canadian movie about a little person who solves his problems through discussion, not gun fights or car chases. It pokes fun at everybody, but not maliciously; it is about morality but nothing is pushed in your face. It is gentle, but it's not Walt Disney syrup. It reminded me a little of *I've Hear the Mermaids Singing*, because both movies deal with the personal politics of someone who is not beautiful, rich, strong, crazy, a cop... just someone.

Anyways, you should go see this movie if you get a chance. If you don't like it, write me back and tell me and I'll send you \$5 for your trust. Say 'HI' to Nance for me.

Peace, Sandy.



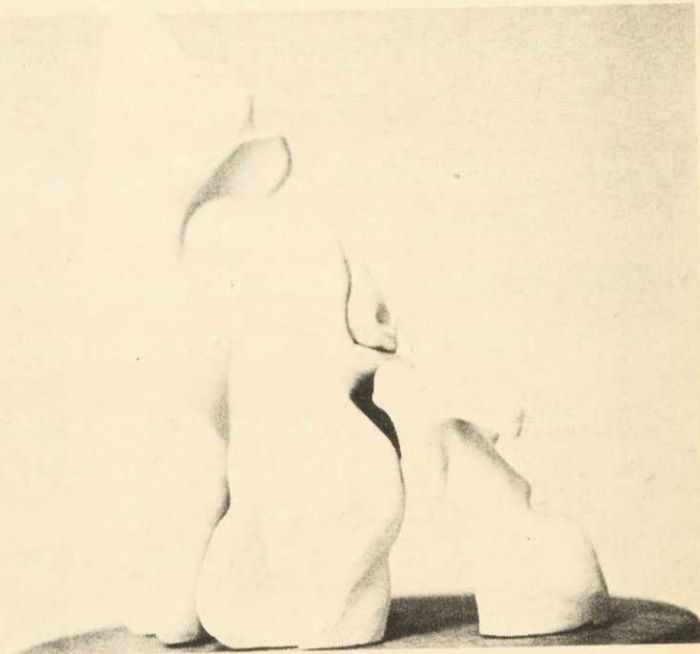
Though his character appears inherently evil it is impossible to hate him.

Wanda Graham was suitably hysterical in her role as Myra Bruhl, an unfortunate victim. The scene in which she tries to prevent Sydney from killing Clifford Anderson was both funny and tragic. Graham plays both conflicting emotions with style and at the end of the first act, a void is created by her departure.

Sydney Bruhl's lover, Clifford Anderson, is played by Andrew Cochrane of *Switchback* fame. Cochrane's performance was somewhat bland and studied in comparison to the vitality of Gardner. Anderson's motivations are difficult to understand and his complex character never comes to life in the hands of Andrew Cochrane.

Perhaps the most annoying character in *Deathtrap* is Helga Ten Dorp (Ruth Owen). Owen's strange accent and hysterical psychic predictions are rather grating and over acted but her comedy scenes are enjoyable. The play ends on a distinctly upbeat note which leaves the audience chuckling and shaking their heads.

I cautiously recommend *Deathtrap* as an entertaining piece of theatre with a strange sense of humour. Be prepared to be surprised. *Deathtrap* is playing at Neptune until April 9.



True Love Myth by Silver Frith (Stoneware).

Photo: Kirsten Nicols

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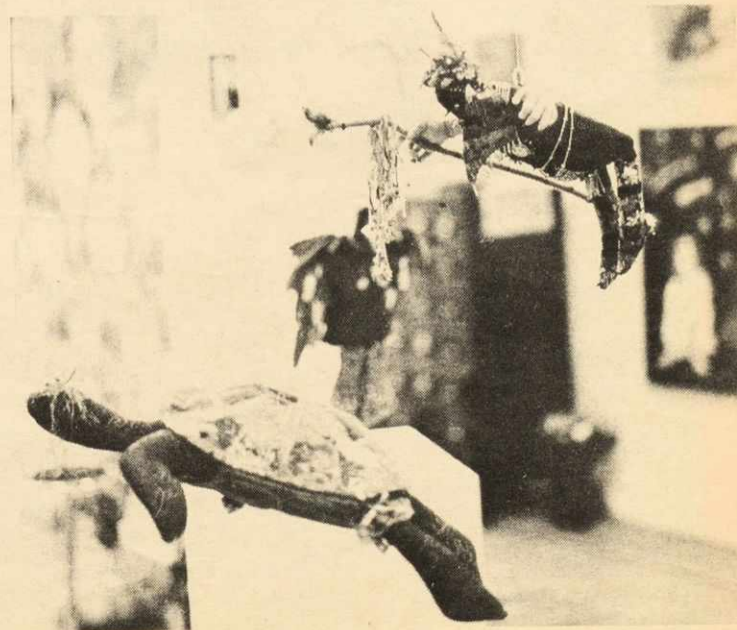
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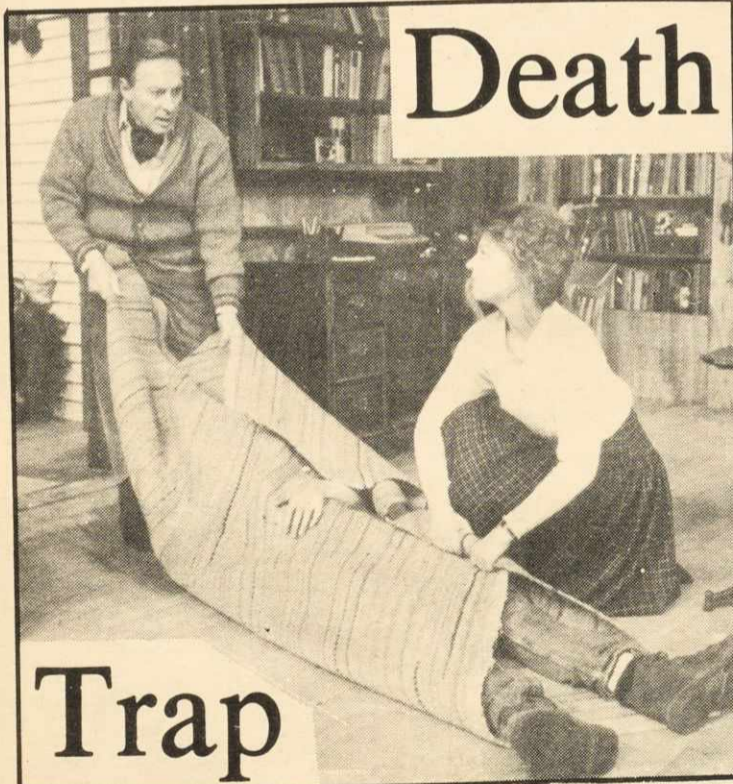
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Eagle Woman and Turtle Woman by Margi Hennen

Photo: Kirsten Nicols



David Gardner, Andrew Cochrane, and Wanda Graham in *Deathtrap*.

Photo by: GEORGEKAKOS

Death

Trap

by Lisa Clifford

Ira Levin's *Deathtrap* enjoyed a packed house for its opening at Neptune Theatre on Friday night. This thriller revolves around several murders and truly embodies the phrase "there's more here than meets the eye." The action centres around Sydney Bruhl, a thriller writer suffering a dry spell, and his relationship with aspiring playwright Clifford Anderson. Sydney's wife Myra, psychic Helga Ten Dorp and family lawyer Porter Milgrim complete the cast.

Without revealing too much of the plot, it would be safe to say the

Deathtrap is a bizarre experience. There is blood, sex, murder and in each scene, at least one shocking event. What at first seems to be a predictable plot — an aging playwright kills in order to pass off a highly commercial play as his own — develops into something unusual. Nothing is what it appears to be and as the audience's applause dies away, they are heard to comment "I liked it but it was kind of strange."

Most actors' performances were excellent with David Gardner's Sydney Bruhl stealing the show. Gardner plays his part convincingly and his caustic one liners keep the audience amused.